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**Chairman Towns Wants Details on J&J's Phantom Recall**

***Documents show company attempted to avoid announcing recall of Motrin in 2008***

Washington – Chairman Edolphus “Ed” Towns (D-NY) is asking Johnson and Johnson for details about a 2008 “phantom” recall of a certain type of Motrin. In question is whether or not the company hired a contractor to go to retail stores and secretly purchase suspect Motrin rather than notifying the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) about problems with the medication. The committee learned of the phantom recall last week while preparing for a hearing to examine Johnson & Johnson's recall of popular pediatric medications.

“I have referred to this as the ‘phantom recall,’ but unfortunately, it is all too real and extremely troubling,” wrote Chairman Towns in a letter to Johnson and Johnson CEO William C. Weldon. “It raises the question of whether Johnson & Johnson placed a higher priority on preserving the reputation of its Motrin brand than it did on consumer protection.”

Among the items requested by Chairman Towns, a timeline for the phantom recall and whether the contractor's employees were instructed to act as though they were ordinary customers when they went to buy the affected Motrin.

According to an [internal document the Committee uncovered last week](#) entitled "CSCS Motrin Purchase Project", the contractor was instructed as follows:

You should simply "act" like a regular customer while making these purchases. THERE MUST BE NO MENTION OF THIS BEING A RECALL OF THE PRODUCT! (emphasis in the original)

“It was not until the FDA caught Johnson and Johnson in the midst of the phantom recall that the company announced a proper recall of the flawed Motrin,” said Chairman Towns. “I am deeply concerned about this incident and I intend to get the bottom of it. The American people have trusted Johnson & Johnson for more than 100 years but what have uncovered raises serious questions about the integrity of this company.”

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## **Documents and Links**

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[Letter from Chairman Edolphus Towns to Johnson & Johnson CEO William Weldon](#)